

this is an important amendment. It is not a good amendment but it is an important amendment and I would like to have you open your bill books and look at just what it will do and I want you to think it out because in my personal opinion this is a bad proposal. My kill motion is intended to deal with it in the only way we ought to responsibly deal with it. Very simply, Senator Warner suggests that we abrogate the constitutional activities that we have undertaken a number of years ago when we did annual budgeting. Now I have heard many people in this Legislature indicate that they would like to go back to biennial sessions but I have not heard anybody who doesn't at least want to go back to biennial sessions and do it all in that sort of arrangement. This would say that we budget in biennial sessions but we come back here and do other sorts of activities. The constitutional amendment was sold to the public that we would be more responsive and we would do these annual budgets. Now it still says that we can do new things in that second year but it basically protects the budgeting process from any sort of tough decisions. An example: If for one reason or another this Legislature finds itself with an economic problem and we have to go back in and cut the budget, it makes it that much more difficult to accomplish that task. Now I think frankly that is wrong, it is incorrect, and not only that, and probably more importantly than that, it is bad public policy. This is not a good proposal on that basis but there is more, there is more. We set up a long-term budgetary authority, something that could if it was a good idea, which it is not, could be done in our rules but frankly we won't do it in our rules because it is not a good idea. So what we do unto this constitutional amendment is we elevate what ought to be a legislative rule if it was a good idea, which it is not, and we elevate it to the point of making it a constitutional amendment. Now that, my good friends, is not good public policy. That Constitution ought not be the legislative rules and that Constitution should not, in fact, inhibit us from accomplishing those things that are important to us and that is what this thing does. It says we have to make long-term decisions on every A bill, every budgetary process. This proposal as it stands is neither well thought out nor does it deal with any responsive needs of the state.